



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on April 20, 2026

Iran Recloses Strait; U.S. Navy Disables Iranian Ship; Kent to Trump: Leave Iran

Heading into renewed peace talks as the end of the two-week ceasefire approached, Iran closed the Strait of Hormuz for the third time on Saturday. The U.S. Navy disabled an Iranian tanker, after which Marines boarded the vessel.

Iran, which attacked two Indian ships as they tried to cross the strait, said it will remain closed until the United States ends its blockade. And U.S. President Donald Trump told Liz Landers of PBS he wanted one thing from the impending negotiations: Iran cannot have a nuclear weapon.

U.S. peace negotiators, led by Vice President J.D. Vance, are scheduled to leave for Islamabad, Pakistan, today for talks to end the war.



U.S. Central Command
Iranian cargo vessel Tousca being confronted by U.S. forces



Commentary: Trump Truth Social Posts On X

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Iran decided to fire bullets yesterday in the Strait of Hormuz — A Total Violation of our Ceasefire Agreement! Many of them were aimed at a French Ship, and a Freighter from the United Kingdom. That wasn't nice, was it? My Representatives are going to Islamabad, Pakistan — They [Show more](#)

5:29 AM · Apr 19, 2026



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Taking the *Touska*

Yesterday, the guided-missile destroyer USS *Spruance* fired upon the Iranian vessel *Touska* “as it transited the north Arabian Sea at 17 knots enroute to Bandar Abbas, Iran,” [U.S Central Command reported](#):



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American forces issued multiple warnings and informed the Iranian-flagged vessel it was in violation of the U.S. blockade.

After Touska's crew failed to comply with repeated warnings over a six-hour period, Spruance directed the vessel to evacuate its engine room. Spruance disabled Touska's propulsion by firing several rounds from the destroyer's 5-inch MK 45 Gun into Touska's engine room. U.S. Marines from the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit later boarded the non-compliant vessel.

Shortly thereafter, the Marines seized the ship, "which remains in U.S. custody."



U.S. Central Command

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U.S. Marines depart amphibious assault ship USS Tripoli (LHA 7) by helicopter and transit over the Arabian Sea to board and seize M/V Touska. The Marines rappelled onto the Iranian-flagged vessel, April 19, after guided-missile destroyer USS Spruance (DDG 111) disabled Touska's [Show more](#)



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As is his wont, Trump bragged about the action on Truth Social.

"The Iranian crew refused to listen, so our Navy ship stopped them right in their tracks by blowing a hole in the engine room," [he wrote](#):



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Right now, U.S. Marines have custody of the vessel. The TOUSKA is under U.S. Treasury Sanctions because of their prior history of illegal activity. We have full custody of the ship, and are seeing what's on board!

Iran Fires on Indian Ships

As for Iran firing on the Indian vessels, [The Washington Post reported](#) that Indian officials called in Iran's ambassador to the country for an explanation.

"Two gunboats affiliated with the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps opened fire on a tanker about 20 nautical miles northeast of Oman Saturday morning, according to the United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations Center (UKMTO), a monitoring agency that is part of the British Royal Navy," the *Post* reported.

[TankerTrackers.com](#) reported that one of the tanker's crew distress-called Iran's military and explained that the ship had permission to pass through the strait.

"India's External Affairs Ministry released a statement saying it had summoned Iran's ambassador in New Delhi on Saturday night, conveying concerns over what the ministry called 'a shooting incident' involving two Indian-flagged ships in the strait," the [Post explained](#):

India's foreign secretary, the statement said, urged Iran's ambassador to resume allowing India-bound ships across the strait.

UKMTO reported that a container ship was hit by an unknown projectile, causing damage to some of the containers. There were no fires or environmental impact reported, and authorities are investigating the incident.

Separately, a cruise ship reported seeing a nearby splash, according to UKMTO.

Closed, Open, Closed

On Friday, as [The New American reported](#), Iran reopened the strait. Then it closed the waterway, which carries some 20 million barrels of oil per day.

"The Americans, with their repeated breaches of commitments well documented in their record continue acts of piracy and maritime theft under the so-called blockade," [said](#) Iran's Fars News agency. Until the United States stops the blockade, "the status of the Strait of Hormuz will remain as it was before."

Yesterday, Trump claimed that Iran attacked French and British ships, and that Iran's closing of the strait was helping the United States. And he again threatened to destroy power plants and other civilian infrastructure. "They are the ones that lose with the closed passage, \$500 Million Dollars a day!" [he wrote](#):

The United States loses nothing. In fact, many Ships are headed, right now, to the U.S., Texas, Louisiana, and Alaska, to load up, compliments of the [Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps], always wanting to be "the tough guy!" We're offering a very fair and reasonable DEAL, and I hope they take it because, if they don't, the United States is going to knock out every single Power Plant, and every single Bridge, in Iran. NO MORE MR. NICE GUY!



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They'll come down fast, they'll come down easy and, if they don't take the DEAL, it will be my Honor to do what has to be done, which should have been done to Iran, by other Presidents, for the last 47 years. IT'S TIME FOR THE IRAN KILLING MACHINE TO END!

No Nukes

Trump reiterated to Landers that his main goal in Iran is its not acquiring a nuclear weapon. "Very simple," [he told](#) the reporter. "Iran cannot have a nuclear weapon. Very simple."

The [ceasefire announced](#) early this month expires on Wednesday, and Vance and his team are [set to land](#) in Pakistan for talks beginning tomorrow. Former U.S. counterterror chief Joe Kent is encouraged by Trump's statement. "This is key," he wrote today on X:

If we narrowly scope our goals to no nuclear weapons, it's possible that we reach a deal.

The demand for zero enrichment has been a dealbreaker in previous negotiations.



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Joe Kent
 @joekent16jan19 · [Follow](#)



President Trump again confirms his stance on a successful outcome: that "Iran cannot have a nuclear weapon,"—not that Iran must agree to zero enrichment.

This is key. If we narrowly scope our goals to no nuclear weapons, it's possible that we reach a deal.

The demand for zero [Show more](#)

PBS News: What happens if the ceasefire expires tomorrow evening?

Trump: Then lots of bombs start going off.

Is Iran still participating in the talks that will be happening in Islamabad? Will they still be there?

I don't know. I mean, they're supposed to be there. We agreed to be there, although they say we didn't. But no, it was set up. And we'll see whether or not it's there. If they're not there, that's fine too.



Liz Landers @ElizLanders

President Trump tells me that if the ceasefire expires tomorrow "then lots of bombs start going off" - I also asked about his son-in-law Jared Kushner's business interests in the Middle East while negotiating in the region.

More from @NewsHour: pbs.org/newshour/polit...

7:58 AM · Apr 20, 2026



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Yesterday, responding to Trump's latest threat to destroy civilian infrastructure, he wrote that Trump detailed two courses of action and ignored a third: "Simply leave."

Noting that President Ronald Reagan abandoned Lebanon in 1984 because U.S. goals were unattainable, [Kent explained](#) that the Iranians won't accept a negotiated settlement unless Trump concedes on nuclear enrichment.

"A major escalation will lead to a very destructive outcome for Iran, the region, and eventually the U.S.," Kent wrote:

If POTUS chooses brute force and targets civilian infrastructure, we will create another generation of radicalized Iranians who will rally around the regime and escalate the war by any means possible.

If POTUS opts to strike the civilian infrastructure, declare victory, and then leave, we will only further erode our standing in the world, the petrodollar, and eventually our status as the world's reserve currency holder. We need to get out now.

Don't double down on failure. Avoid the [sunken cost trap](#), leave now, and put America's interests first.

Kent has repeatedly warned Trump against escalating the war against Iran. [Trump has called](#) Kent "low IQ," a "sleazeball," and a "troublemaker."



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